



Implications of global climate change for housing, human settlements and public health

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Abstract:

Global climate change has profound implications for human societies. The present---ecologically unsustainable---trajectory of human development fails to provide for the basic needs of a substantial fraction of the global population, while diminishing the prospects for future generations. Human-caused climate change has already begun to affect weather patterns, physical and biological phenomena, and vulnerable human communities. Because the social processes of production and consumption have their own momentum, and because carbon dioxide has a long atmospheric lifetime, further climate change is inevitable over the coming century, even allowing for the adoption of mitigation measures. This situation implies that we should also try to reduce, and where possible to prevent, the adverse effects of climate changes by planned adaptation. Will human settlements be able to provide a healthy living environment and shelter from extreme climate events, such as cyclones and heat waves? In this paper, we review the nexus between human health, climate change, and the planning of housing and human settlements. We conclude that adapting to a rapidly changing global environment will be a major challenge, in the context of increasing population and per capita consumption, without increasing pressures on natural systems. Energy-efficient cities and the creation of opportunities for poor countries will be important elements of people centered, ecologically sustainable, development in the twenty-first century.

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Resource Description

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Ecosystem Changes, Temperature, Unspecified Exposure

Temperature: Extreme Heat

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Urban

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Global or Unspecified

Health Co-Benefit/Co-Harm (Adaption/Mitigation):

specification of beneficial or harmful impacts to health resulting from efforts to reduce or cope with greenhouse gases

A focus of content

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

General Health Impact

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation, Mitigation

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified